

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VALLET 00190 301700Z

43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 FEA-02 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00

INT-08 SCI-06 DRC-01 IO-14 EURE-00 /167 W

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P 301630Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5194

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

USINT CAIRO PRIOTITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 0190

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENGR, PFOR, MT, EG, SA, KU,LY,BA

SUBJ: ENERGY : MINTOFF SWING AROUND MIDDLE EAST

REF: VALLETTA 182 (NOTAL)

1. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR MASSA BERNUCCI CONFIRMS THAT MINTOFF, ACCOMPANIED BY SMALL DELEGATION, WILL DEPART MALTA JAN 31 AND AFTER TRANSITING ROME WILL VISIT CAIRO, SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, BAHRAIN. EXCEPT FOR CAIRO, MAIN PURPOSE OF MIDDLE EAST STOPS IS TO SEEK CRUDE PETROLEUM SUPPLIES AT LOWER PRICE FOR MALTA THAN CRUDE NOW BEING FURNISHED BY LIBYA (WHICH MASS BERNUCCI BELEIVES MALTA IS PAYING \$13.34 PER BARREL).

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PAGE 02 VALLET 00190 301700Z

2. PRESENCE OF PRESIDENT OF NEW AIR MALTA , ALBERT MIZZI,

INDICATES MINTOFF WILL ALSO BE DISCUSSING AIR COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN MALTA AND MIDDLE EAST.

3. MASSA BERNUCCI SAID HE WAS ASKED BY PRIME MINISTER'S PRIVATE SECRETARY ON 24 HOUR NOTICE TO ARRANGE FOR MEETING BETWEEN MINTOFF AND PRIME MINISTER RUMOR DURING 5 HOUR STOPOVER IN ROME JAN 31. AFTER CONSIDERABLE EFFORT, MASSA BERNUCCI WAS ONLY ABLE TO COMMIT TUMOR FOR TENMINUTE VISIT BY MINTOFF, AND THAT MUCH ONLY IF PLANE ARRIVES ON SCHEDULE.

4. COMMENT: WHILE WE HAVE NO MEANS OF ASSESSING MINTOFF'S CHANCE OF SUCCESS IN SEEKING CHEAPER OIL, HIS VISIT TO CAIRO WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY INCLUDE DISCUSSIONS ON SUEZ CANAL REOPENING. THIS IS POINT OF HIGH INTEREST TO MINTOFF SINCE FUNCTIONING CANAL COULD PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS FOR MALTA'S MAJOR INDUSTRY-- DRYDOCK AND SHIP REPAIR. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER MORETON ALSO BELIEVES MINTOFF WILL BE EXPLORING POSSIBILITY OF ACTING AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN SADAT AND KHADAFI IN EFFORT TO FIRM UP RELATIONS BETWEEN LIBYA AND EGYPT. MASSA BERNUCCI NOTED THAT WHILE HE WAS TALKING WITH MINTOFF'S PRIVATE SECRETARY AT NOON JAN 30, LIBYAN CHARGE WAS MEETING WITH MINTOFF, PROBABLY ON MESSAGE TO OR FROM KHADAFI RELATED TO CAIRO VISIT.

5. MINTOFF TRIP IS REFLECTION OF HIS CURRENT DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES ARISING FROM DRAMATIC PRICE RISE IN PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AS WELL AS SHORTAGES OTHER CONSUMER ITEMS.GETZ

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**TAGS:** ENRG, PFOR, MT, EG, SA, KU, LY, BA  
**To:** STATE  
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